



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
LANSING



ISMAEL AHMED  
DIRECTOR

April 3, 2008

The Honorable Bill Hardiman, Chair  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS  
Michigan State Senate  
Lansing, MI 48933

The Honorable Dudley Spade, Chair  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS  
Michigan House of Representatives  
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Senator Hardiman and Representative Spade:

Section 575(3) of 2007 Public Act No. 131 requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to submit semi-annual reports to the legislature on the following:

“As a condition of receiving appropriated money, the department and the office of the friend of the court shall work in cooperation to provide support services to families of custodial parents who have been awarded child support from a parent who is incarcerated.”

The friend of the court provides statutorily required services to all custodial parents who have been awarded child support regardless of the status of the payer as it relates to incarceration. If requested by an incarcerated person who demonstrates inability to pay, current child support is stopped by the court during the period of incarceration (*Pierce v Pierce*, 162 Mich. App. 367 (1987)). Further, custody is not likely to be contested if one parent is incarcerated. As a result, the friends of the court do not have significant contact with custodial parents when the non-custodial parent is incarcerated.

It is noteworthy that friends of the court will seek payment of child support arrearages from a non-custodial parent's prison account even if current child support is stopped due to the incarceration. The Michigan State Court Administrative Office in cooperation with the Department of Corrections has provided policy and forms to the friends of the court to use to request this repayment. Also, the friends of the court monitor the release dates of incarcerated persons so that child support can be re-established in a timely manner.


The Hon. Bill Hardiman  
The Hon. Dudley Spade  
Page 2

If you have any questions, please contact John Sorbet, chief administrative officer, DHS, at (517) 373-7787.

Sincerely,



Ismael Ahmed  
Director, MI Dept. of Human Services



Suzanne Hollyer  
President, MI Friend of the Court Association

c: Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittee on DHS  
Senate and House Fiscal and Policy Offices  
State Budget Director